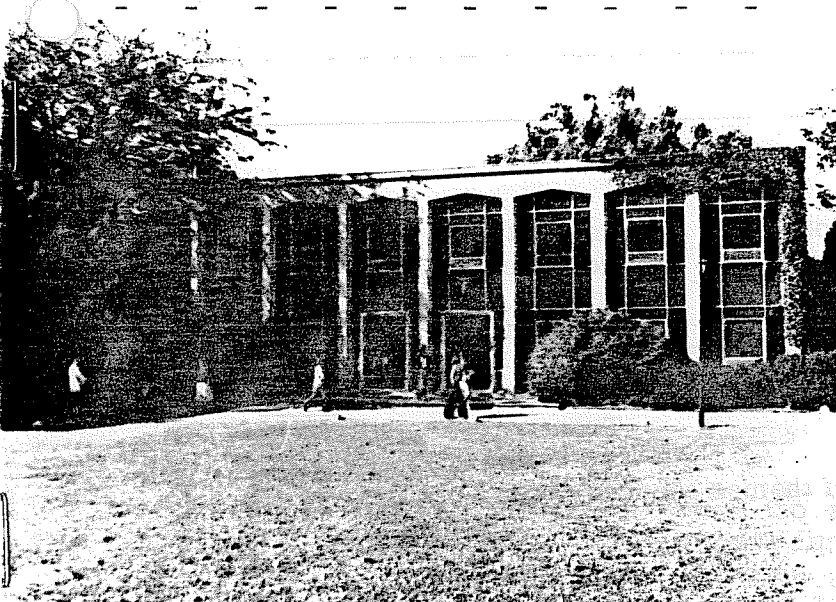


MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no.	Form no.
	31D8

731



Town Northampton

Address Smith campus

Name: Wright Hall

Present use classroom and office building

Present owner Smith College

Description:

Date 1961

Source Smith College Archives

Style contemporary

Architect William and Geoffrey Platt, of N.Y.C.

Exterior wall fabric brick

Outbuildings (describe) none

Other features brownstone basement; extensive use of opaque and clear glass; two stories

Altered no Date _____

Moved no Date _____

5. Lot size:

Less than one acre _____ Over one acre _____

Approximate frontage _____

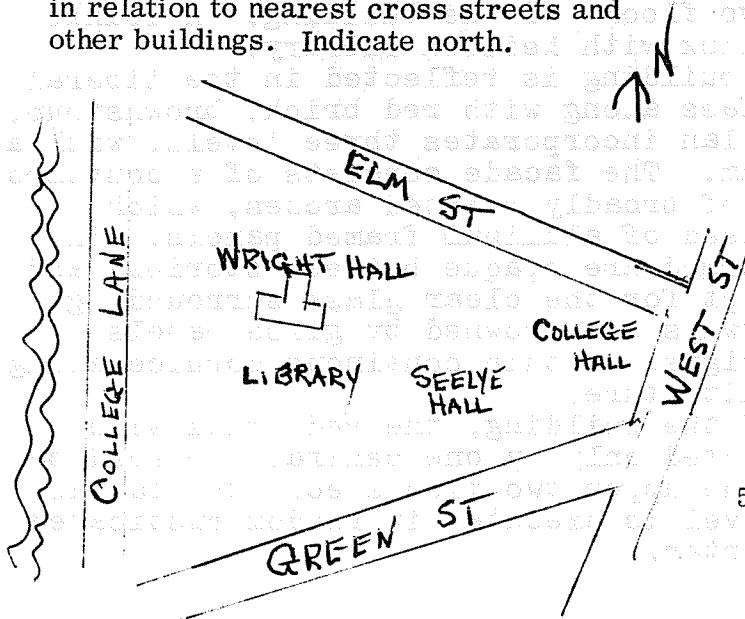
Approximate distance of building from street _____

6. Recorded by Ann Gilkerson

Organization Northampton Historical Commission

Date March 26, 1977

4. Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
USGS Quadrant _____
MHC Photo no. _____

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) Smith College

Original use same as present

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates _____

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	_____	Conservation	_____	Recreation	_____
Agricultural	_____	Education	<u> x </u>	Religion	_____
Architectural	<u> x </u>	Exploration/ settlement	_____	Science/ invention	_____
The Arts	_____	Industry	_____	Social/	_____
Commerce	_____	Military	_____	Humanitarian	_____
Communication	_____	Political	_____	Transportation	_____
Community development	_____				

9. Historical Significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

Completed in 1961 from designs of New York architects William and Geoffrey Platt, Wright Hall was completed with a gift of \$500,000 from two anonymous donors. The building was dedicated October 20, 1961, to the memory of former Smith President Benjamin Wright.

A 300 seat auditorium and a social science laboratory (as well as a language laboratory) occupy the basement level, while faculty offices and seminar rooms comprise the upper two floors of the building. A lounge at the second floor level forms a link with Neilson Library.

The contemporary style of the building is reflected in the liberal use of opaque, smoked, and clear glass along with red brick, brownstone, and aluminum. A basic "T" shaped plan incorporates three levels, with a projecting basement level auditorium. The facade consists of a contemporary stylized two story concrete arcade of broadly pointed arches, which alternates with a glass wall comprised of aluminum framed panels. The eight regular bays of glass thus formed are opaque between stories, and translucent in all other areas, except for the clear glass surrounding the entryway. The two facade doorways are crowned by glass panels containing light grey heraldic designs. A thin continuous cornice along the flat roof recalls Egyptian architecture.

On the projecting east wing of the building, the red brick with white mortar wall surface is punctuated only by one centrally placed bay. On the south side of Wright Hall, the upper two floors echo the facade arcade motif, while the basement level is executed in random rusticated brownstone blocks laid with pink mortar.

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)
Smith College Archives